

Chapter 6

Training

"You must remember that whether you wear one stripe or six, one bar or silver eagles you automatically become an "Army spokesman" when you are approached by the press. Within 24 hours the words of that Army spokesman can be flashed world wide, particularly if they can be construed as criticism..... Everything you say should have the ultimate aim of furthering that effort. Your approach to the questions of the press should emphasize the positive aspects of your activities and avoid gratuitous criticism. Emphasize the feeling of achievement, the hopes for the future, instances of outstanding individual or unit performance and optimism in general. But don't destroy your personal credibility by gilding the lily. As songwriter Johnny Mercer put it, "You've got to accentuate the positive and eliminate the negative."

- U.S. Continental Army Command memo to advisers in Vietnam.
The Military and the Media,
William M. Hammond, 1988

TRAINING OBJECTIVES

6-1. The cost of learning in combat is too high. Therefore, commanders and staff section chiefs must conduct cost- and time-effective staff training during peacetime. In order to conduct effective training, every consideration regarding PA activities should be evaluated.

6-2. Evaluation should include, but is not limited to, analysis, planning and execution of the operation. The PA staff, in conjunction with other members of the organization, must train in the initial planning of the operation. In order to train effectively, the following considerations should be evaluated:

6-3. **Analysis.** Specified and implied tasks are identified at home station for deployment, mission and redeployment requirements.

- Feasibility of all tasks are determined and assessed.
- Consider any PA guidance issued by higher headquarters and determine specialized training requirements.
- Consider all phases of host nation operations and the effect on your operation and organization.

- Determine the availability of required assets and equipment for all phases of the operation.
- Consider the availability and use of internal and external assets -- joint, RC and combined -- to augment known shortfalls.
- Determine any transportation requirements for your organization or attached personnel.

6-4. **Planning.** Planning includes PA annexes, command directives, DOD guidance, regulations and directives stipulated by the commander's intent and mission requirements.

- PA annexes should contain a brief, general description of the situation and intent to conduct operations.
- Planning should also consider enemy forces and host nation personnel and their relationship to the operation.
- PA planning should be considered for all attachments and detachments currently known or listed under the task organization. This includes planning for assets and requirements from home station to redeployment.
- Training should be conducted emphasizing procedures for handling the transmission of all information. Theater-unique requirements may call for special training scenarios.
- All logistical and administrative requirements need to be addressed in the planning and training process.

6-5. **Execution.** The staff, soldiers and media understand the commander's intent in terms of his command position and operational mission. The operational area ground rules are included in the PAG and are widely disseminated throughout the organizations.

- Encourage local media to accompany deployed units.
- Adequate vehicles have been identified and assigned to transport PA personnel and media throughout operational areas. This includes vehicles, aircraft and available transportation assets for transporting all media personnel and products. Consideration of transportation should include all support activities in the forward area of operation.
- Public Affairs personnel in the media center will prepare releases of specific events to disseminate in the area of operations. News media inquiries are anticipated, received, researched and answered as quickly as possible.
- Local security review policies are clear and will not delay the transmission of information.
- Executions of the theater policy for registration policies and local media pool operations have been completed. Non credentialed media are identified and escorted to the rear for registration. Once registered, media personnel will be allowed to cover stories and interact with organizations in the area of operations.

6-6. The staff section must be able to:

- Cope with the unexpected. For example, media arriving at the unit level without PA escort or media not registered with the joint media operations center.

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- Separate fact from fiction. For example, media having misinformation which they believe as fact and trying to confirm it.
 - Coordinate well amid confusion. For example, be able to access the PA staff at the MOC.
 - Think clearly while under great stress. For example, have a unit PA representative (UPAR) who will handle escorted/nonescorted media for the unit.
 - PA elements develop training plans from assessments of their performance proficiency on their METL.
 - Detailed training plans for Public Affairs Detachments are contained in ARTEP 45-500-10-MTP, for the Mobile Public Affairs Detachment in ARTEP 45-413-30-MTP and for the PAOC, ARTEP 45-326-50-MTP.
 - The training plans in those documents can be readily adapted to train other types of PA elements, such as a division PA staff.

PRINCIPLES

6-7. All PA training must be based on the training principles in the FM 25-series:

- **Train as combined arms and services team.** Do not train in a vacuum. Train with the unit you support.
- **Train as you fight.** Conduct realistic training. PA leaders must move soldiers out of the office and into the field to conduct training, including joint and combined operations. Set up a media operations center and conduct operations for a day.
- **Use appropriate doctrine.** All PA leaders should be familiar with FM 3-0 (100-5), *Operations*; FM 3-13 (100-6), *Information Operations*; and the PA manual, FM 3-61 (46-1), *PA Operations*.
- **Use performance-oriented training.** Performing tasks under field conditions with appropriate evaluation enables your soldiers to perform better under actual conditions.
- **Train to sustain proficiency.** PA units must take advantage of all training opportunities to sustain proficiency, participating in all CPXs, FTXs and deployments that their supported units are involved in.
- **Train to challenge.** Training for PA tasks must create the kind of pressure PA soldiers will face in actual situations. Ensure it is challenging but realistic.
- **Train using multi-echelon techniques.** The entire PA chain-of-command must participate in training for it to be realistic and effective.
- **Train to maintain.** Soldiers and leaders must keep equipment in a high state of readiness in support of training and for deployment.
- **Make commanders the primary trainers.** The unit commander is the primary training manager for the unit. The commander assigns primary responsibility to officers for collective training and to NCOs for soldier training.

TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES

6-8. Regardless of type, size or configuration, PA elements/units must train with the units they support. PA leaders must evaluate the ability of their units to support their real-world missions successfully and determine areas of weakness.

6-9. PA leaders must determine what training opportunities they can participate in realistically and coordinate for support from higher headquarters. If support is not provided, then unit leaders must create their own unit training program that simulates the tasks they will be asked to do when deployed.

6-10. For example, PADs should deploy with brigades to NTC or JRTC to practice their unit mission and capabilities and be evaluated accordingly. If the PAD is tasked with garrison duties, these duties must be retasked to allow the unit to train and maintain.

6-11. PA elements and units should take advantage of the excellent training opportunities offered by the JRTC and NTC. Both centers conduct media-on-the-battlefield training for visiting maneuver units. Public affairs elements should accompany the maneuver brigades and establish field media centers to take maximum advantage of these resources. It is imperative that PA elements be able to function effectively in austere environments. They cannot perform to their maximum capability unless they train accordingly. The key is repeated, tough, realistic training.

Historical Perspective

An initial PA team was sent to Somalia to set up a media operations center in December 1992. Mogadishu at the time was a war zone with many fronts. Initially, U.S. forces set up operations at the airport. Under the constant roar of C-5s, the PA team tried to organize a MOC. They had a very difficult time dealing with the lack of power and water. Eventually they were able to set up in a schoolyard. A “JIB-in-a-box” arrived with computer equipment, but it was all 220-volt — power in Somalia is 110-volt.

For the duration of the operation, personnel at the MOC learned to live and work under austere conditions, where food, water, power, and communications were constant problems. They eventually were able to set up a briefing room with benches, an old couch and a bulletin board for posting media opportunities, and conducted media operations under austere conditions.

(After Action Report 1992)

6-12. Home station CPXs and FTXs are fundamental training events that provide PA elements relatively low-cost opportunities to practice the full spectrum of wartime PA tasks on a reduced scale.

6-13. A visit by even a single reporter can be used to exercise a broad range of media support tasks including establishing a field media center; arranging interviews; preparing subject matter experts, individual soldiers and commanders to meet the media; preparing fact sheets; responding to media queries; registering media; arranging escorts and transportation, etc.

PA TRAINING FOR NON-PA AND PA PERSONNEL

6-14. Public affairs training is not limited to training for PA soldiers. PA elements/soldiers also have a responsibility to train non-PA soldiers and family members in military/media relations. Organic PA elements must develop training programs for their supported units. These can take the form of classes as well as pre-deployment briefings for units and family members.

6-15. Training for commanders and subject matter experts. Unit commanders and individual subject matter experts must be prepared to be interviewed. It is a PA responsibility to ensure they are familiar with the ground rules and know to restrict their statements and comments to their area of expertise. Details on how to do this are contained in the Soldier's Manual task, "Prepare a Spokesman to Address the Media," #224-176-4013.

6-16. Training for unit soldiers. Individual soldiers must be advised of the inevitability of media presence during military operations. Classes for units can be part of sergeant's time training and consist of teaching soldiers what they should and should not talk about when meeting the press. All soldiers should be encouraged to represent themselves as soldiers and encouraged to speak about the jobs they perform for the Army.

6-17. Training for family members. PA training for family members consists of educating them on their rights and responsibilities when interacting with the media. Family members often know more about specific operations than should be revealed to the media. They must be advised not to discuss information, which may be used by the enemy against their spouse's unit, such as details about troop movements, destinations, missions etc. They must also be advised that they have the right to refuse to talk to the media. Family member briefings should be a standard element of pre-deployment family support group activities.

6-18. Basic soldier skills. Public affairs soldiers are soldiers first and public affairs practitioners second. It is imperative they are well trained in basic soldiering skills. Public affairs elements and units must make time to train to standards on common soldier tasks that allow them to effectively shoot, move, communicate and survive on the battlefield.

6-19. Readiness. All PA elements and units must have, and exercise, detailed load plans. Soldiers should be aware of the importance of maintaining all equipment and vehicles in a state of readiness for deployment.

6-20. PA NCOs must ensure soldiers participate in preparations for overseas movement (POM) so they are administratively and medically prepared for worldwide deployment. Soldiers should be aware of the importance of wills, shots, powers-of-attorney, personal data and allotments.

6-21. Staff Section and Unit Training. A state of operational readiness to conduct combat or non-combat operations must be attained and maintained. This level of readiness is accomplished by preparing individuals, shifts and staff sections to perform assigned tasks and other duties at the desired standard of proficiency in advance of assigned operations.

6-22. Standards of performance must be set so the section can evaluate its performance. Examples of these standards include:

- Understanding DOD's policy statement -- Commanders will ensure maximum unrestricted disclosures of unclassified information to news media representatives consistent with operational security, guidance from higher headquarters and the privacy of individuals concerned.
- Escorted and unescorted media -- If the media has a PA escort, you may agree to an interview after the escort explains some basic ground rules. If not escorted, ask media personnel to accompany you to the command post, NCOIC or OIC and contact higher headquarters/public affairs officer.
- Conducting an interview -- Military personnel have the right to deny media interviews. If a soldier elects to provide the media with an interview, he should only discuss those things which he has direct responsibility or personal knowledge, and ensure an escort (PA or non-PA) is present. See Appendix N for more details.

THE INTERVIEW PROCESS

6-23. The Interview Process:

- Prepare for the interview. Consider the type of questions the media will ask, and think what your answer will be. When possible, ask for PA assistance (UPAR or PA personnel).
- Relax and be yourself. Imagine that the reporter is someone you know and talk with him in a relaxed manner.
- If cameras are present, ignore them and talk directly to the reporter. Be brief and concise. Remember, a TV news story will use only 10- to 15-second answers.
- If you need time to respond, ask the reporter to restate the question. A simple pause before answering the question is sufficient.
- Use simple language and avoid military jargon (i.e., military abbreviations or acronyms). If you must use military terms, explain what they mean.
- Use appropriate posture and gestures. Relax and be yourself.
- Answer only one question at a time. If asked multiple questions, answer the most important one first, or answer the one you're most comfortable with.
- Always try to end your comments on a positive point. This is your opportunity to tell your unit's story.

6-24. Things not to do:

- Do not allow media to videotape recognizable landmarks nearby, sensitive equipment, interior of tactical operations centers or other sensitive areas. Use OPSEC as guide on this matter.
- Do not answer speculative questions or give opinions concerning real or hypothetical ("what if") situations.
- Do not use the expression, "No comment." A more appropriate comment would be, "We don't comment on future operations." or

"I'm not qualified to respond to your question." or "That information is classified, so I can't discuss it."

- **Never** lie to the media.
- Consider everything you say to the media as "on the record." **Never** make "off the record" comments.
- Don't lose your temper when media representatives ask questions you consider inappropriate or foolish. Such questions are usually rooted in ignorance rather than in malice.
- Do not discuss operational capabilities, exact numbers or troop strengths, numbers/types of casualties, type of weapons systems or future plans. Use general terms like approximate, light, moderate or heavy.
- Don't repeat a negative phrase in response to a media representative's negative question (e.g., Q: Since your unit is poorly trained, can you really deploy? A: We're well trained and ready to go.).
- Staff section and unit training should be integrated into headquarters FTXs and CPXs in order to perform adequately within the unit's operational staff during real-world missions.

TRAINING EXERCISES

6-25. Training exercises will vary from major FTXs to CPXs and Tactical Exercises Without Troops (TEWTs). Each training opportunity provides the staff element realism, the opportunity to experiment and the ability to face situations. These challenging training exercises enable soldiers and units to tell the Army's success stories.

6-26. Training exercises also enable the commander and staff to:

- Emphasize the tactical SOP.
- Execute plans in a dynamic, hostile environment.
- Exercise bold solutions.
- Exercise contingency plans.
- Experience possible defeat without the penalty of combat loss.
- Work toward goal-oriented performance standards by team building while providing PA support.
- Training exercises also allow PA personnel to become operationally, strategically and culturally aware, and puts them in a unique position to interface with the news media personalities which shape the perceptions of our national and international audiences.

TRAINING FOR MEDIA FACILITATION

6-27. Facilitating media in the military environment includes three phases -- planning, preparation and execution.

6-28. **Planning.** The Media Operations Center receives requests for registered media to visit units in their areas of operation. The MOC will contact a unit and coordinate the time and location for the visit, as well as notifying a PA or nonPA escort for a mission. The escort will need to know the unit's location and whether the unit's UPAR (if applicable) will travel with the group or meet them at the unit. The unit will need to

know the number of media visiting, the duration of the visit and the status of the unit for the last 24 hours (i.e., has the unit been in contact with the enemy and has there been any significant actions).

6-29. The escort will plan the route to the unit. The number of media going will determine the number of escorts and vehicles needed for the trip.

6-30. **Preparation.** The JIB or escort will notify the media and tell them the time and location of departure and estimated time of return. This allows the media to plan for their supplies and equipment for the trip. The escort should meet with the media and update them on the unit's status, find out if the media has any specific requests before departing, cover safety points and OPSEC requirements, and ensure they have everything they need. This will also provide the escort with a direction for the types of questions or issues the media may address. The information concerning the unit's situation will allow the escort to develop a list of Q&As for the commander and individuals whom the media will interview.

6-31. The escort should meet with the drivers and review the route to the unit, cover contingency plans and determine an inspection time before movement. The escort should also contact the unit to reconfirm the visit and their location, as well as providing a list of the names and agencies of media visiting them. The escort should meet the media at the vehicles to insure they have what they need for the trip.

6-32. **Execution.** The escort should leave as scheduled and travel as the tactical or non-tactical situation dictates.

6-33. When arriving at the unit, the escort should have the driver park the vehicle as directed by the unit and have media personnel wait at the vehicles (if possible, with military supervision). The escort needs to request that the media not take photographs of the unit's position for operational reasons. Let the media know you are going to get the commander and will return as soon as possible. If the situation is hostile, get the media inside the perimeter and secure them away from equipment and the command post.

6-34. The escort should meet with the UPAR and let him/her know who is in the media group. Ensure that the unit will be able to provide the interviews the media requested.

6-35. The escort should brief the commander and let him know the ground rules, covering possible Q&As. Answer any questions or concerns he may have about the interview. Let him know that you will be present during the interview to assist him. When possible and if mission requirements permit, the commander should be available for the media. Review the unit's OPSEC requirements to ensure you understand what cannot be photographed.

6-36. The escort should determine where the commander wants to meet the media. If the area is not appropriate for conducting interviews (may be based on PA experience or media request), provide an alternative recommendation to the commander.

6-37. The escort should move the media to the interview point and introduce the commander to the group. After the interview, the escort should facilitate the rest of the coverage with the help of the UPAR. Do not allow the media to linger in the area of operations and become

mission detractors. Wrap up the visit, return to your vehicles and depart. Upon returning to the JIB, the escort should be available to back brief the PAO.

6-38. The requirement to maintain proficiency in the full range of public affairs collective and individual capabilities and skills places a high priority on tactical training for both AC and RC PA soldiers. Tactical training participation enhances knowledge of battlefield requirements, increases unit cohesion, and forms the basis of experience needed for operational planning, mobilization, deployment and mission success.

6-39. PA will continue to face expanded missions in the joint arena. Quality PA training provides sufficient numbers of trained PA personnel to conduct joint and combined PA missions. Training must emphasize the joint perspective, enhance interoperability, and contribute to each combatant CINC's PA Mission. Exercise participation is critical to the training of PA personnel.

6-40. Trainers must fully incorporate a broad array of PA activities into all types of exercises and war gaming. These activities can be injected into computerized battle simulation as the training exercise driver. They should also be used in BCTP command post exercises, and JRTC, CTC, and NTC rotations. Seminars, area assessments and TEWTs are all forms of training that also provide relevant, realistic training.

